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THE  
SPIRITUAL BODY

BEING AN  
HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO REMOVE  
THE CHARGE OF ABSURDITY

FROM THE  
DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION

AND THEREBY  
RENDER IT MORE THE OBJECT  
OF A RATIONAL FAITH;

AND A  
LESS SUBJECT OF SNEER TO THE SCEPTICS

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BY THE AUTHOR OF  
SIMPLE TRUTH, OR A PLEA FOR INFANTS  
AND THE LIBERTY OF THE HUMAN WILL.

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THE  
SPIRITUAL BODY, &c.

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SECTION I.

THE doctrine of the Resurrection, although not literally peculiar to the Gospel, yet is in some good sense one of its peculiar doctrines, as it is there more fully revealed; its Author, who is Christ Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, brought forward to our view; and as it stands one of the chief corner-stones, without which the Gospel superstructure would fall; as St. Paul strongly and elegantly argues, in the beginning of his 15th chapter to the Corinthians. For these reasons Christians have ever held themselves obliged to believe it, and he can hardly be denominated a Christian who should doubt it: yet how painfully have some felt themselves bound to believe what their senses contradicted, and what in the nature of things is impossible to be effected: while others, with as painful a reluctance, have declared it a subject they dared not think on. Now as every discovery the Divine Being has been pleased to make of himself or

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works, will bear investigation, and the more examined the brighter they appear, it should seem this doctrine must have suffered by some false manner of representing it, or some gross ideas formed concerning it. Some judging by Ezekiel's vision, suppose bone will meet bone, and flesh and sinews come upon them: others, from the representation in pictures, expect men and women will come tumbling up from their graves, scrambling who shall get out first: even the learned, the sublime, and ingenious, have mentioned the dust of the saints as precious, or reckoned the scattered atoms will be united again to form the human body, or spoken of refining the flesh and raising bones, &c.—To refute those several opinions is the design of this undertaking.

Ezekiel's vision, it is well known, refers to raising the Jewish captives again into a state and nation, notwithstanding they looked on themselves as dry bones, as being figuratively and politically dead; it meant to convey hope to the living, and had no reference to the literally dead. That those who were buried a century past should arise from the graves in which they were then deposited, is impossible, seeing they are not there; they have done as when above ground, given place to others, left their houses to successors; one generation passes from those dreary wastes and another cometh; and if the Scriptures give us a just description of the state of the dead as a state  
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of rest and sleep, one can hardly suppose them mingled in the mould of a burial-ground, as that is continually tossed and agitated; neither if they were so intermixed could there be any expectation of their coming forth, as from such a mixture nature has forbid any thing should arise. When the seed is rotted and mixed with the clods of the valley it never springeth again; nor will the rotten root of a tree ever sprout forth bough or blossom: besides every thing mixed with the earth remains with it, and becomes a part of its very substance; therefore if the world of mankind was to come forth of the ground, it must be a new creation, not a resurrection; for a shovel of mould is no more a man than a heap of rubbish is a house; and man might as easily have arisen out of the earth at first, without the divine hand to form him, as arise again when intermixed and become once more of its very substance.

The Jewish law fixeth a kind of stigma on the carcase of man, pronouncing it more defiling than that of a beast, and commanding their sepulchres to be placed at a convenient distance from their dwellings, with a visible mark set on them, lest any one should unawares touch them; and notwithstanding those laws were more particularly intended as a guard against the heathenish custom of making gods of their departed heroes, and sacrificing to the dead, yet connecting with such laws what our Lord said of sepulchres being  
ful

full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness, we find very little respect paid to this precious dust.

As to uniting the scattered atoms, or ever so refined particles of matter, as every thing retains its own nature, being of the earth it must still be earthy, consequently corruptible and mortal; and for ought we know, ere the world come to its end, every atom of dust may have been a part of many human bodies: for the earth neither increaseth nor decreaseth, but as Solomon remarks of the sea, "all the rivers run into it, yet the sea is not full; from the place whence they came thither they return:"—so is the earth, it circulates continually, every generation of men are full of it, yet like the rivers they empty themselves whence they came; the earth returns to the earth. Nor are the means and instruments to be employed at the general resurrection, in the least calculated for uniting such scattered atoms. The angels (we are informed) will be commissioned to gather the saints together to Christ, not collect them together and new rear the dispersed fabric; the Spirit, which raised Christ from the dead, is to quicken them again into life, not rebuild them: the potent voice of the Son of God is to awaken them out of their long sleep, and to this mighty voice the additional sound of a loud and shrill trumpet, the fittest instrument for awakening the dead from sleep, but the very



unfittest for uniting particles of matter so as to form human bodies.

Thus do those several notions appear to me absurd; and as the Almighty does not usually work by contraries, but whenever it pleaseth him to disturb the order of nature, or overturn its laws, on some special occasion, to assert his own authority and dominion, this is called going out of his place and doing his strange work. He does not seek to raise our admiration and astonishment by working wonders, so much as our adoration by working uniformly wise, consistent, and harmonious, as the God of order; therefore having made us rational, can never expect us to believe absurdities.

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## SECTION II.

AS we know so very little of ourselves at present, it is not to be expected we should accurately know what we shall be; yet we might judge thus far, that spiritual bodies will not be composed of animal matter, nor incorruptible bodies of component parts, which must naturally separate. The Sadducees (very consistent with their other principles) denied the resurrection, for they

they believed neither in Angel or Spirit; the Pharisees, who were full as learned as themselves, believed both, and they taught the resurrection of the body. Now these Sadducees were not sceptics in other respects, not Epicureans, but a religious sect among the Jews, worshippers of the one living and true God, according to the institutions of Moses; and in common with the rest of their countrymen, expected a future reward, a rest in Abraham's bosom. But while they believed the immortality of the soul, conceived of heaven as one vast void, without visible inhabitants, understood all spirit was equally sublime and invisible, in short, connected no idea with spirit but simple consciousness or pure intelligence. They neither believed there was any such beings the Scriptures describe as angels, nor the possibility of a human ghost or apparition; and thought they did the world a kindness in laughing such things out of countenance. How far they indulged false notions, we who are blessed with the New Testament added to the Old, may form some judgment; and when we read of thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, cherubims and seraphims, angels and arch-angels, &c. we surely need not think heaven without inhabitants, who are visible at least to each other; and as Moses in ordering the tabernacle made all things according to the pattern shewed him in the mount, it is more likely the cherubims



cherubims which covered the mercy-seat were the real likenesses of some existing being, than only pictured from fancy. However, the appearance of those heavenly messengers in this world of ours, who were seen by mortal eyes, and conversed to mortal ears, is so frequently and clearly revealed in the word of God, that to dispute it would be to call in question the authenticity of the Scriptures; for however prophecy is wrapt up in figurative language, which the writers themselves did not fully understand, yet history is so plain and distinct, that we may as well doubt the birth of our Blessed Redeemer, as doubt if angels appeared to the shepherds to announce it; as well believe our Lord never suffered his agony in the garden, as disbelieve the descent of an angel to strengthen him; and as well dispute his resurrection, as deny that angels were seen at the sepulchre: thus as to angels. As to spirits or ghosts, as I am writing to modern Sadducees, I must think it an unreasonable resolution to believe nothing but their own senses, and to resolve against the testimony of writers of the last century, (who were many of them men as cautious, as judicious, and as honest as any of the present day) only because they relate facts not familiar to us; not considering the effect naturally ceaseth with the cause. The regularity of public records, together with the certainty and facility with which intelligence is conveyed from city to city, or from

one nation to another, render such appearances (which an indulgent Providence might then permit) quit unnecessary in the present day: and with regard to many things more terrifying than useful, let it be remembered, what a blessing it is that the Gospel shines among us in its native simplicity and purity; that idolatry and superstition have fled before it, and with them the power of Satan; for so far as the kingdom of Christ is advanced, so far is the kingdom of Satan weakened; but because it is now day, should we peremptorily affirm it never was night? When God commands, "you shall not suffer a witch to live;" must I believe he commanded to put to death all the cross old women in the land of Judea? or not rather believe there really was such characters? And when the same Divine Being declares, "the nations he cast out before the children of Israel did converse with familiar spirits," who am I to believe, the man who persuades me those things were always impossible, or the mouth of truth itself, which asserts it as a fact? Although there may be a thousand whimsical stories, the mere creatures of the fancy, and a thousand tricks played off by jugglers to establish priest-craft, yet that no more proves every narrative of the kind to be false, than hypocrisy can prove there is no truth in religion.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, while he resided in this world, took every opportunity which presented  
itself



itself to remove old prejudices, and give a more liberal turn to the judgment; yet when an opportunity the most favourable offered to refute this opinion, he put not the least check; when the disciples cried out, supposing they had seen a spirit, he only quieted their minds, by saying, "it is I, be not afraid." If it be replied, that this was an error of so little importance, and so childish a nature, it was below the notice of our Divine Master, and therefore he passed it over; be it so; yet, I think there is proof of our Lord's granting the point in full, when after his resurrection, appearing in the midst of his assembled disciples, (the doors being shut) they supposed they saw a spirit; "handle me and feel me," said he who was equally acquainted with flesh and spirit, and knew well the laws of each; "handle me and feel me, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Was not this granting the point, in acknowledging their fears were not so very childish or romantic? Was it not acknowledging that a spirit might have entered as he did, and bore a form similar to that in which he then stood before them, only with this difference, it could not stand the touch? "A spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have." If we add the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, (a picture of our Lord's own drawing, therefore drawn in just colours) it is there supposed that one might rise from the dead, and be

sent with a message to the living; the Rich Man's request being denied, not because the thing was impossible, but because of its inutility and superfluity; they had sufficient means already, and "if they believed not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded tho' one should rise from the dead." Now all those instances put together amount to a proof, that our Lord did grant the possibility of spirits or ghosts appearing in this world.

The calling up Samuel may be usefully inquired into in this place, though I know not from what arbitrary cause that apparition is commonly represented as the devil in the shape of Samuel. No doubt there was something in the process of this affair quite different to what the woman expected, and from every thing she had before seen, which occasioned her crying out. If I speculated on this circumstance it should be thus: if God suffer the ghosts of his own people to be disturbed on any very extraordinary occasion, he will not leave them in the hands of evil spirits, but sends guardian angels to conduct them. The woman saw God ascending, a phrase very commonly used among the Hebrews, when they saw Angels. An old man came up whom she appears to have no knowledge of, perhaps having never seen the prophet in his life-time; but Saul perceived it was Samuel, and bowed himself. This must have been the body of Samuel, for  
the



the shape and colour of the soul are its ideas and conceptions; and the manner of address is as a man awakened by violence out of a deep sleep. "Why hast thou disquieted me and brought me up?" Not brought him from heaven the residence of his soul, but called him up from sleep; and the message of terror he delivered to the king conveys the same idea: "to-morrow thou and thy three sons shall be with me." Not share in state of felicity with the happy soul of the prophet; such a message would have been a real blessing, not a threatening; but with me in that state of silence and repose to which I am now returning, notwithstanding this transient disturbance; with me in *hades*, the unseen world, where the righteous and the wicked rest together, till the dead arise and come to judgment.

I have said thus much in proof of the existence of angels and spirits, in order to help our ideas of the scripture account of resurrection bodies; since without such a belief, our conceptions concerning it must be very gross; or, like the Sadducees of old, we may be tempted to deny it. Dr. Watts (who was unpolite enough to believe in apparitions) has mentioned them in proof of the separate existence of the soul; but as they are the very features and gestures of the body, why may we not suppose them the very thing? and instead of thinking it impossible they should ever appear in this world, we ought to be very  
thankful

thankful to the Author of Nature, who locks them up in a profound sleep, and thus defends us from their visits ; for to this world (the wicked especially) would naturally attract.

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### S E C T I O N III.

**P**HILOSOPHY professes to know nothing of spirit; concludes every thing within its reach is matter, and perhaps ascribes properties to matter no ways essential to it. In so concise an history as that of the creation, delivered in such strong and nervous language, methinks not one syllable should be overlooked. “ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth: “ and the earth was without form, and void; and “ darkness was upon the face of the deep; and “ the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the “ waters.” Now here Moses describes the earth not a void, not emptiness, but as it should seem dead matter, void of any principle by which it might be brought into form, and an impenetrable darkness on it's surface, so that light could not enter; but when the Spirit of God moved upon the waters, and matter became impregnated with spirit, then God said, “ Let there be light,”—  
let



let there be form,—let there be motion, vegetation, and life, and the obedient earth and seas obeyed; and when we consider that every thing in nature owes its growth or sustenance to water, it surely chimes in with this account Moses gives of the water being impregnated with spirit. According to this, philosophy knows as little of matter as of spirit, unless it could be examined in its origin; when, instead of form being necessary to it, it was void of any principle by which it could be reduced to order, till intermixed or impregnated with spirit. Upon these principles the doctrine of the transmigration of souls appears a more rational system than is commonly thought; only remarking that the ancients distinguished the conscious reasoning principle in man, not soul but mind; and even in the Old Testament, the heart and reins, the mind and spirit, are terms frequently used to denominate what we mean by soul; and soul there commonly signifies animal life: they meant therefore the soul of matter, the spirit which transfuseth itself throughout nature; which is stronger in beasts than in vegetative life, and perhaps stronger in the human composition than both. This ever active and vigilant principle might, for any thing their philosophy could reach, or in all likelihood as far as nature could operate, have been equally transferred from man to other parts of the creation, and there might have been no difference  
betwixt

betwixt this spirit of man and that of the beast; If God had not had a desire to the work of his hands, if it had not been pronounced, " Let not  
 " man die; let him not return into the promif-  
 " cuous heap;" if our Lord Jesus had not ransomed us from the power of the grave, bearing away the curse, and taking the charge of these sleeping spirits, thus it might have been.

Solomon (who knew nature well, having a superior strength of mind to examine its laws) considers the animal frame of man the same as the beast; for throughout the book of Ecclesiastes as he proves the insufficiency of all sublunary things to man's happiness, while he takes them up one by one, he considers man as related only to this world and the vain things of this life; not as hurtful to his future interest, but as unsatisfactory and incompetent to his present felicity; for which reason he carefully keeps out of sight his immortal part and final account till the very end, when he changes his style, and adds a solemnity to the whole. Now man, as animal, this great naturalist represents as a beast; they consider not " that they are beasts; man has no pre-emi-  
 " nence above the beasts; Do not all go to one  
 " place? Who knoweth the spirit of a man which  
 " goeth upward from the spirit of a beast which  
 " which goeth downward?" There was no discernible difference; nor could the most curious researches into nature ever discover their different  
 destination,



destination, had not revelation taught Solomon more wisdom than the ancients. But modern philosophy having resolved every thing into matter, argues thus: having no medium by which to judge of spirit, and arguing only negatively, we conclude, spirit is in every respect what matter is not: a very rash conclusion indeed. Suppose they had no possible means of acquainting themselves with a worm, and only hearing of such a reptile living in the earth, and crawling under our feet and feeding on our dead carcases; if the conclusion in this case should be, that the worm must in every respect be what man is not, would not such a conclusion be false? as the worm has a sense of pain, a love of life, and some other properties in common with man. Thus might we rationally judge of spirit; although it is impossible to be acquainted with pure simple spirit unconnected with matter, yet, judging by the infinite variety and perfect coherence throughout all the works of God; considering the curious link which joins, or hair-breadth line which separates nature, so that it is scarcely discernable where vegetative life ends, and the animal begins; where the brute ends, and the human nature begins; or, perhaps, from a Newton to an angel, where the human powers stop, and the angelic begins. These things considered, why may we not conclude matter and spirit must somewhere divide in as nice a point? and where so likely as the spiritual body, which

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(as it belonged to this world) is most likely to be the very lowest degree of spirit, and having lent its aid to, and been incorporate with matter, will retain many of the same properties when separate from it.

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#### SECTION IV.

**I** PROCEED to the scripture account of the Resurrection. Job, whose faith was strong in this article, represents it as a state of sleep, in which he should be held a considerable time: "all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come: Thou shalt call and I will answer thee." And in another place, comparing himself with vegetative nature, he considers the sap or spirit of the tree as retired within itself, because it shoots out into fresh life and vigour in the spring; but the sap or spirit belonging to the animal part of man gives no such speedy and visible proof of its existence. Man's spirit retires, but where, sense can form no conception; yet faith believes it a ghost still existing, although retired from sense, as the sap of a winter-tree is from outward appearance, and shall, when it has slept its winter through, arise to a never ending summer.

David,



David, alluding to death, calls it a valley of shadows, or apparitions; he reckons it a state of sleep, from whence he should one day be awakened. Our Lord uniformly calls death sleeping: "our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him;" alluding to the raising him from the dead. "He that believeth on me shall never die;" said he who is the Resurrection and the Life. Agreeable to this declaration, our Lord proves the doctrine of the Resurrection, by asserting the Patriarchs were living, their bodies living; for that was the subject of inquiry; they were living when Moses stood before the fiery bush: and this was no distinguishing privilege peculiar to those eminent men, for all live to God, "who is not the God of the dead, but of the living." "She is not dead, but sleepeth," was the affirmation in another instance, where he was laughed to scorn, because they all knew that she was dead.

I cannot omit St. Paul's address to king Agrippa, a man of a liberal education, inquisitive mind, and openness of heart; to this man the Apostle (who was equally learned and polite) proposeth a question, with an air that bespoke it unanswerable, "Why should it seem a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"—Had he said impossible, it would refer to the Omnipotence of God, to which nothing is impossible; but in saying incredible, he appeals to the man's

reason and judgment : which inclines me to think this doctrine was taught and understood in a different manner from what some later ages have conceived of it, else Agrippa might easily have replied, Because not founded in nature, but contrary to all its known laws. For this material body, which we see broke up, dispersed, scattered, and devoured by vermin, and in the course of time become interwoven with the bodies of many other animals or men, so as to become a real and proper part of their successors ; for these men, after all, to arise corporeal bodies, just as they were deposited in the grave, this is an absolute incredibility.

I proceed to that full and clear discussion of this subject in the 15th chapter of Corinthians. In that feat of polite literature, the city of Corinth, there was some among professing Christians who had reasoned themselves out of a belief of this doctrine ; they said, there is no resurrection of the dead ; and asked, with a sneer, how and with what bodies they should arise, after they had been mutilated and transformed (through the means of vegetation) into the substance of inanimate or animal nature ? The Apostle retorts their sneer, and directs them to examine the nature of vegetation ; that the seed could produce no harvest, unless it entered into a death state ; “ that which “ thou sowest is not quickened, except it die : ” neither do you look for the same identical seed to  
spring



spring up again: "thou soweſt not that body which ſhall be;" yet they expected every ſeed to produce its own kind, according to the original appointment of God, that every thing ſhould have ſeed in itſelf; and there was no chance or hazard, if wheat was the grain ſown, that any other but wheat would ſpring from it. But the Apoſtle appears to recollect the contracted ideas they had imbibed, through a philoſophy which taught that ſpirit muſt in every reſpect differ from matter, or from every thing within the compaſs of this terreſtrial globe; conſequently a ſpiritual body would grate upon their ears as a contradiction in terms; he therefore digreſſes a little, by calling their attention to animal nature in general, which, however united in one common principle, all animal, yet varied in its texture and quality: "one kind of fleſh of men, " another fleſh of beaſts, another of fiſh, and another of birds." So, ſaid he, "there are bodies " celeſtial and bodies terreſtrial," and theſe vary in the ſame proportion as inhabitants of different worlds, as bodies here vary by inhabiting different elements: "for the glory of the terreſtrial " is one, and the glory of the celeſtial is another." Light is the next ſimile he uſeth, which is the ſame in nature, yet widely different in degrees, and as it proceeds from the ſun, the moon, or the ſtars, varies in its appearance, operation, and effects. "There is one glory of the ſun, another  
" glory

“ glory of the moon, and another glory of the  
 “ stars, and one star differs from another star in  
 “ glory.” As if the Apostle had said, Look  
 around, look above, or look beneath you, and  
 behold together, with a beautiful uniformity, an  
 infinite variety, all glorious, with a regular gra-  
 dation throughout all. Judge, therefore, by the  
 analogy of things, and by the works of the Al-  
 mighty, which are within the compass of your  
 knowledge, measure those which are beyond it,  
 and thus judging, you will perceive spirits may  
 be diversified, in the same manner as every thing  
 in this material system.

Having made this digression, he proceeds in  
 the direct answer to the question, “ How and with  
 “ what bodies they should arise ?” So as the seed  
 which must die, or enter into a state of separation  
 ere it is quickened ; so as the seed which comes  
 not up again the same as committed to the ground,  
 but riseth into new life and vigour ; so as the seed  
 which never comes up in an heterogeneous form,  
 or casually produceth a grain differing from itself,  
 but every seed produceth its own body ; “ so also  
 “ is the resurrection of the dead : it is sown in  
 “ corruption, it is raised in incorruption ; it is  
 “ sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is  
 “ sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is  
 “ sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual  
 “ body : for there is an animal body and there is  
 “ a spiritual body. According as it is written,  
 “ the



“ the first Adam was made a living soul,” or a living man, made out of or composed of the ground; “ but the second Adam,” the man Christ Jesus, “ is a quickening spirit.” The Apostle argues our compound nature as matter and spirit, from our union with those two heads; and notwithstanding that which is animal appears first, and not that which is spiritual, yet afterwards it shall appear we are spiritual; for although “ the first man is of the earth,” and consequently “ earthy,” yet “ the second man is the Lord from heaven,” consequently spiritual; and as surely as we have borne the likeness of our first parent, who was of the earth, and therefore earthy, we shall bear the likeness of our second head, who is heavenly, and therefore spiritual. Thus the Apostle, who had before compared the body to seed, which must have the vivid principle in itself or could produce no harvest, now proves his assertion, that we shall be raised spiritual, by our union to our spiritual head, through which means we have a spiritual body as surely as we have a natural body, or the principle of spirit interwoven in the animal in some such manner as the vivid principle is interwoven in the grain.

He goes on, and in the strongest terms reprobates the idea of raising corporal bodies. “ This I say, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” which is a spiritual world; neither can flesh and blood, which is corruption,

corruption, or in its own nature corruptible, partake of the inheritance with the saints, which inheritance is incorruptible.

He proceeds to shew the necessity there is for every thing mortal to be left behind, ere we ascend the heavenly world, by asserting that if any should be alive at the sounding of the last trumpet, they also must pass under a change similar to death; they must likewise be separated from every thing gross or earthy; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Thus St. Paul to his Corinthian friends; and he must have instructed the Thessalonians in the same principles, or he would have prayed in an unknown language when he preferred such a prayer to God for them, "that their whole spirit, even their soul and body, should be preserved blameless."

We learn from this Apostle, that these bodies of ours are not all earth, but interwoven with spirit, and this spirit being the substance, or essence, is denominated the body, and this is what (being separated from all matter, which is earthy, corruptible, and mortal) will be raised from its bed of earth a real spirit, although inferior to some more sublime and illustrious spirits in the celestial world, as the twinkling light of a star is inferior to that of the sun; and varying in kind from that invisible, conscious reasoning principle we call soul, as a beast differs from a man, or a



fish from a bird: and this separation of matter from spirit, he informs us, is generally performed in a way congenial to the other works of the Almighty, and the operations of nature; and if we consider that a corpse, although a dead man, yet is not dead matter, not dust and ashes, but matter with all its vivid principles within itself, and even these principles in motion, for it changes visibly and perpetually. All this considered, there is nothing incredible in the supposition, that 't goes through a change somewhat similar to the seed; yet as all this is effected by the mighty power of Christ, he can make the same separation by the means of fire and water, all the elements being under his controul, "he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The comparing the body to seed likewise conveys the supposition of a speedy separation, and the Apostle (speaking in the present tense, "so is the resurrection of the dead, it is raised," &c.) confirms the sentiment.

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## SECTION V.

**I**T appears from the foregoing observations, that the nations of the dead are not sleeping dust, but sleeping ghosts; as to where they sleep, might be hard for us to understand if it were more fully revealed. Daniel describes them "sleeping in the dust of the earth;" other scriptures speak of the sea, and death, and *hades* giving them up; however, it is abundantly sufficient for us to know they are safe under the protection of him "who has the keys of death and the "unseen world; and there the rich and the poor, "the righteous and the wicked sleep together; "there the wicked cease from troubling; there "the weary are at rest." If it be asked, what shape this spiritual body takes when separate from matter, I answer, its own shape. I have before noticed, from the account Moses gives of the creation, that form is not necessary to matter. Solomon seems of this opinion, when he calls the forming the bones in the womb, "the way of "the spirit." Now if matter receive all its symmetry and beauty from its incorporation with spirit; if spirit form our limbs, dispose our features, proportion the organs, give life to the eye, and vigour to the countenance, no doubt these may remain when the matter which was inter-

woven



woven with it is all dropt ; and that thus it is we have some proof in the account the Evangelist gives of such separated bodies. “ Many dead “ bodies,” or bodies which had been dead, “ arose, “ and came out of their graves, after our Lord’s “ resurrection, and came into the holy city, “ namely, the city of Jerusalem, and appeared “ unto many.” Now these were not shadows, but bodies ; not corporeal, but spiritual bodies ; as they did not return again to their dwellings to eat and drink as Lazarus did, who was called out of sleep to die again ; they only appeared ; they were faints, no doubt some of our Lord’s own disciples, and the first trophies of his power over the grave ; these were resurrection bodies, and they must have appeared just like what they were in life, or how could their friends, to whom they appeared, know them to be the bodies of their acquaintance, the bodies of faints ? This, I think, amounts to a proof of my assertion, that they continue their own shapes. But what glorified bodies will be, St. John observes, does not yet appear, yet are there a great many hints up and down the scriptures. Our Lord assures the Sadducees, those who are counted worthy of the resurrection to life, are as the angels, and angels have a visible glory, described by those who saw them, as white raiment, or shining raiment. St. Paul styles the glory of the faints, “ being clothed “ upon,” in one place ; in another, “ being con-

“ formed to the image of the Son of God.” St. John says, “ we shall be like him, when we see “ him as he is.” Daniel describes their lustre “ as the firmament, and as the brightness of the “ stars.” The lustre put on the face of Moses was undoubtedly a small degree of this glory; as well as a similar instance in Stephen, “ when the “ whole council looked upon him, and saw his “ countenance as it had been the face of an “ angel.” But St. Peter testifies what he had seen, for he was eye-witness to the bodies of Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory and talked with his Master, concerning the sufferings he was to accomplish at Jerusalem; which (by the way) is a proof that the organ of speech, which is man’s glory, will be continued in a future state. The disciples saw likewise the glory of their Lord, “ when the fashion of his coun- “ tenance was altered, and his raiment became “ white and glistering:” this was a visible glory, or in the language of St. Paul, “ a being cloathed “ upon.”

In this place I will just speak a word to the question, Whether the saints will know each other in a future state? Now when we consider them as their very selves, in their own likeness, to be sure they can know each other; but when we consider them as arrayed in glory, and perhaps some more glorious than others, it is as likely they may not. Nor can such knowledge be essential,

or



or so much as an addition to future felicity; for he who knows God, and is known of him, with the perspicuity of heavenly light, he who enters into his Master's joy, and partakes of his glory, can want nothing to make him compleatly happy, nor receive any addition to so sublime a felicity from any inferior object; and however necessary and comfortable the ties of consanguinity are in this little contracted sphere we now occupy, yet, when we come to heaven, our hearts will be enlarged, in some proportion to the enlarged circle we shall then fill, and all those lower ties will be dissolved; "there they neither marry nor are given in marriage;" and when we arrive at the full stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus, we shall adopt his sentiment, saying, "Who is my brother, my sister, and mother, but those who do the will of my Father in heaven?" We shall know no man after the flesh, but be known to each other in the more sublime and exalted character of sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and all we be brethren.

As infancy and old age bear the marks of this transitory state, the one defective, the other declining, it may naturally be supposed, neither an infant of days, nor a man of grey hairs, will be found among the glorified saints; all will be compleatly beautiful, nothing defective, when the church is presented to the Father, not only with-

out

out moral defilement, but likewise without outward spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

When the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead be raised and come to judgment, the scriptures inform us will be the end of the world, or the end of the age; it is future to every generation of men, and, with respect to every individual, will be the last judgment; for the dead shall arise and come forth to give an account of the things done in the body; some awaking to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting confusion. But that all the dead remain in their state of oblivion sleeping from Adam to the present day, is hardly to be supposed; for we know Moses, who died on earth, as well as Elias, who was caught up into heaven, both appeared on mount Tabor in their glorified bodies, and the resurrection bodies of those saints who appeared after our Lord's resurrection, we may be sure were not remanded back to their state of sleep again. The messenger who was sent to St. John with the words of prophecy, it should seem, had been one of our Lord's disciples, for thus he declares concerning himself: "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus." Now add to all those particular instances the prophecy of Daniel, who foretold a general resurrection about the close of the Jewish Œconomy, which prophecy our Lord confirms, by declaring that such an event was  
very



very near at the time he was upon earth : “ the  
 “ hour is coming, and now is, when the dead  
 “ shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and  
 “ they that hear shall live.” Now putting all  
 these things together, I think they afford pretty  
 good evidence in favour of a general resurrection  
 and a decisive judgment, about the time Jerusa-  
 lem was broke up : and the thing which has been  
 is the thing that may be, from that period to the  
 breaking up all the works of this material globe,  
 there may be many such general and decisive  
 periods ; for when our Lord comes to take ven-  
 geance of his enemies, one text informs us, “ he  
 “ will come with ten thousands of his saints ;”  
 “ them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with  
 “ him,” says another ; and St. Paul, “ know ye  
 “ not that the saints shall judge the world ?” Now  
 all these must respect glorified saints, as to come  
 with the saints, and the saints raised up with the  
 promiscuous multitude to stand before him, can-  
 not mean the same thing, any more than judging  
 the world, and standing to be judged, can refer  
 to the same action. St. John (as I understand  
 him) foretels a general resurrection, and final judg-  
 ment, just before he describes the latter day  
 glories of the church.

It is generally acknowledged, the coming of  
 Christ refers to various events : he comes in  
 the offers of the gospel ; “ behold he stands at  
 “ the door and knocks :” in reference to this,

" if any man open to him, he will come and  
 " dwell with him." He comes to every man  
 at death; in reference to this, " blessed is  
 " that servant whom the Lord when he cometh  
 " shall find watching." He comes to try and  
 judge his churches; in reference to this, " he  
 " will come and remove the candlestick out of  
 " its place, where they leave their first love and  
 " do not repent." Christ will likewise come to  
 establish his kingdom of peace, to set up his  
 universal standard, when all nations will flow to  
 him. And he did come in a most tremendous  
 and awful manner to the Jewish nation, when he  
 appeared in his own glory and that of his Father,  
 to avenge the insults cast upon both, to take  
 vengeance on them that knew not God, and  
 obeyed not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
 who were punished with remediless destruction  
 from the presence of the Lord, and the bright-  
 ness of his appearing; for on them came the  
 blood of all the righteous martyrs who had been  
 slain, in as much as in them were accomplished  
 all the dreadful predictions throughout the Old  
 Testament; for to that very people, and that par-  
 ticular period, our Lord applies one of the most  
 tremendous: " they shall say to the rocks and to  
 " the mountains, fall on us," &c. Accordingly,  
 they endured such tribulation as never was before,  
 no, nor ever shall be, for the mouth of the Lord  
 has spoken it; they literally hid themselves in dens  
 and



and caves of the earth, for the great day of the wrath of the Lamb was come, and who was able to stand; and on them abides the sentence pronounced on Cain, "a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be." In reference to this coming of the Judge, the Prophet Joel calls to fasting and sackcloth, to weeping and howling, because it brought destruction from the Almighty. But the coming of Christ to judge the world is nowhere set forth in such terms of horror and amazement, nothing but majesty and mildness describe his approach; St. John saw "a great white throne, and he that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was no place found for them:" thus he sets forth the brilliancy of the judge whose lustre eclipsed the earth and heavens, they both retire as the light of the stars before a noon-day sun; or, in the sublime language of the Prophet, "in comparison with him they appear as nothing, yea as less than nothing." When the throne was set, the books were opened, and the new raised dead, both small and great, judged out of the books. Our Lord's own description is similar to this, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and then he will divide

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“ to each a reward according as their works have  
 “ been.” In both these descriptions, we see the  
 Judge as a decider of causes, appearing, not as  
 an overflowing scourge, not with the battle of  
 the warrior, and garments rolled in blood, but  
 with majesty and mildness; therefore here is  
 nothing in all this which forbids the repetition  
 of such an august appearance, as there are suc-  
 cessive generations of small and great of all na-  
 tions. These thoughts appear to me more con-  
 sonant to scripture and reason than the supposition  
 that all the dead sleep from Adam to the end of  
 time.

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## SECTION VI.

A WORD or two of the never-dying, never-  
 sleeping soul, lest my readers tax me with  
 blending body and soul in one: that soul, which  
 our Lord declares, defies the sword of persecu-  
 tion, that killed the body; because not being  
 composed of component parts, not interwoven  
 with matter, is not liable to dissolution, nor sub-  
 ject to the stroke of death; that soul, which, as  
 our Saviour expresseth it, is born of the Spirit,  
 and of which God is the Father; that spirit  
 which returns to God who gave it, when the body  
 returns



returns to the earth from whence it was. Life and incorruption, it is said, are brought to light by the gospel, that is, the resurrection of the body; which was disputed and disbelieved among those who were blessed with a revelation, and wholly unknown among other nations of the world; but the immortality of the soul, its sublime nature, and indissoluble quality, was acknowledged both by Jews and Greeks; the best philosophy taught it, and the generality of mankind feeling a strong desire for life, and a general apprehension of some future state, took it upon trust. For which reasons, those doctrines are, throughout the New Testament, rather taken for granted, than argumentatively proved. Thus, when both Paul and Peter mention the body as a tabernacle or tent, those to whom they addressed understood there was a living inhabitant within which could return home when the tent was taken down. When St. Paul speaks of death, as being unclothed, does it not convey an idea that the body is the dress of the soul, which may be put off without any damage to itself? This kind of language being familiar in the New Testament, is some argument in proof of the separate existence of the soul, which I shall consider a little more particularly; and first, it seems improbable that after some dying saints, and martyrs in particular, have enjoyed supernatural manifestations so as to elevate them above the sense of pain;

and enable them to sing in the midst of flames, having, as it were, their souls transported to heaven, or with Stephen, seeing heaven opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God; that such souls should immediately on leaving the body, pass into a state of oblivion, and insensibly sleep away two or three centuries, this appears improbable. "The spirit," said Solomon, "returns to God who gave it." "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," said our dying Lord; and Stephen called upon God and said, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Now all these must believe not only that the soul could exist without the body, but exist in a state of felicity, "for in the presence of God is fulness of joy, at his right hand are pleasures for evermore." That St. Paul most certainly believed the soul could enjoy the heavenly felicity separate from the body may be proved, not only from that celebrated passage where he expresses his desire of departing out of this world, that he might be with Christ, which would be far better than abiding in the flesh; but is further proved from that suspence he was in, whether such an event had not taken place. He was caught up into the third heaven, into Paradise, and saw unutterable glory; "but whether in the body or out of the body," says he, "I cannot tell, God knoweth;" he repeats again, "whether in the body I cannot tell, or

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“ whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth.” Now this evident doubt whether his soul remained in his body, or his stronger suspicion that it was really separate, is a very strong proof he believed the soul might be in a state of enjoyment in heaven, his body remaining on the earth all the while. Our Lord’s answer to the thief on the cross would corroborate these evidences might it remain just as it stands in the text ; yet it may be difficult to find a better mode of explaining it ; as to those who fancy our divine Master made use of a vague expression, and by saying Paradise, only meant they should both be in the state of the dead, this is too gross to charge to the account of the dying Redeemer, as this would be mocking the man in the most serious business and in the most important moment. Nor could the Jews use such a word in so unfixed a sense ; for what idea could be connected with Paradise but a state of felicity and delight ? Therefore, if the Jews used to call the state of the dead Paradise, they certainly understood the departed were in some place of enjoyment, not in a state of deprivation and total insensibility ; and there can be very little reason to believe our Lord used the word in any vague or indeterminate sense, after St. Paul tells us he was taken up into the third heaven, into Paradise ; but others suppose our Lord not referring to the time when the man should be in Paradise, but to the

the time he was promising, namely, that day of his greatest degradation and suffering, he then made the promise of future felicity. To this might be replied, the adding this day in such a sense gave no weight to the promise, therefore it was a superfluity, and every superfluous syllable in so momentous a crisis must be impertinent; beside, our Lord never called the time of his suffering a day, but an hour, and his own mode of speech but just before this, might determine the sense; "all of you shall be offended because of me this night:" "I tell thee, Peter, this night, before the cock crow, &c." Now in both these instances, *this night* does not refer to the time when he spake, but to the time when they would be guilty of their breach of trust. What can be more natural than the same person using the same mode of speech but a few hours distant, should intend the same meaning? nor can the text read so smooth, or feel so nervous, in any other sense as in that in which it has been generally taken, namely, as a promise to this anxious dying man, that he should go with his Saviour that very day into his kingdom, into Paradise, where he is the tree of life, dispensing immortality to all his faithful servants; and taken in this sense, it stands a full proof of the separate existence and happiness of the soul; nevertheless a state of activity and service, or of useful and improved enjoyment,

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enjoyment, may be reserved, till body and soul are again united. May we all fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell; and seeing we know that our labour will not be in vain in the Lord, "let us be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

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### THE CONCLUSION.

AS we live in an age of free inquiry, and religion is a science every one should cultivate, I made no apology for stating my opinion;—but, having done with this, (which is generally accounted a perplexed subject) I have likewise done with every design of troubling the world with any more publications. I have wrote, I hope, as God enabled me; but of this am sure, I could get no assistance from man. How far I have acquitted myself in removing the charge of absurdity, the candid reader will be a judge; to whose patience I commend the perusal, and the whole work to the amendment of those better qualified for such an undertaking than,

THE AUTHOR.

F I N I S.





